

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The rejection of Claims 15 to 19, 21 to 23, 24 and 25, and 27 and 28 in the patent application as being anticipated based on the **HIRAOKA et al. '235** patent under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is respectfully traversed. Further, the rejection of Claims 15 through 23 in the patent application as being obvious and unpatentable based upon the **OTIS '844** patent in view of the **HIRAOKA et al. '235** patent under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is also respectfully traversed.

The **HIRAOKA et al. '235** patent discloses a non-slip member capable of being used as an outsole of a shoe and to a manufacturing method of the non-slip member. The non-slip member includes a large number of non-slip convexes that are fixed to an upper surface of a basic fabric performing an anchoring action (generally called "anchoring effect"), characterized in that the non-slip convexes are composed of a rubber.

In the manufacturing method of the non-slip member includes a first step which an unvulcanized rubber is pressed between a metallic mold having a large number of molding concaves corresponding to the non-slip convexes and a holding plate, and the unvulcanized rubber is semi-vulcanized by heating. After the semi-vulcanization, the holding plate is released and burrs not accommodated in the molding concaves of the metallic mold are removed. Thereafter, a base fabric is laid covering a part to be molded serving as the non-slip convexes. By pressuring and heating the part to be molded while laying the base fabric and closing the metallic molds, the part to be molded is vulcanized, and the vulcanized non-slip

convexes are caused to get in the upper surface of the base fabric performing the anchoring action to be fixed thereto. This prior art patent does not disclose or teach the structure, configuration and design of a footwear sole and a method of manufacturing the same including the steps of removing excess textile material after the impregnating step; and providing the textile material in the mold before the delivery step.

The OTIS '844 patent discloses a shoe, especially a slipper having a slip-resistant, shape-retaining outsole. The shoe includes an upper, a lower attached to the upper, and an outsole attached to the lower, the outsole having an outer layer constituted of a fabric material and a backing layer constituted of a shape-retaining material, the outer and backing layers being integrally connected with each other, for example, by being molded in site. . The outer fabric layer provides for increased slip resistance and quieter usage, where the shape-retaining, molded backing layer provides increased shape retention. This prior art patent does not disclose or teach the structure, configuration and design of a footwear sole and a method of manufacturing the same including the steps of removing excess textile material after the impregnating step; and providing the textile material in the mold before the delivery step.

The OTIS '844 patent and the HIRAOKA et al. '235 patent, even when combined, do not teach or disclose the following elements of Amended Independent Claim 15, for a footwear sole and a method for forming the same as follows:

- a) removing excess textile after the impregnating step; and
- b) providing the textile material into the mold before the delivering step.

It would not have been obvious to the manufacturer to provide the textile material to the mold before the delivering step, as this step is a unique processing step.

Neither of the aforementioned prior art patents of OTIS and HIRAOKA disclose any step of trimming and removing excess textile material after the impregnating step, nor providing the textile material to the mold before the delivery step.

Therefore, the combination of the OTIS '844 patent and the HIRAOKA et al. '235 patent with regard to Claim 15 do not show, disclose or teach the specific structure of a footwear sole for a shoe, a slipper or a sandal and the like of the claimed invention.

The OTIS '844 patent and the HIRAOKA ET AL. '235 patent, even when combined, do not teach or disclose the following elements of Amended Independent Claim 24, for a footwear sole and a method for forming the same as follows:

- a) forming at least one outer sole including at least partially impregnating a rubber-free, woven natural textile material into at least a portion of at least one surface of at least one inner sole so that only the textile material is exposed on an outer surface of a sole of the footwear article corresponding to the portion, the outer surface corresponding to an exterior peripheral face of the sole; and
- b) providing the portion into which the outer sole is partially impregnated with the woven natural textile material corresponding to less than the entire at least one surface of the inner sole so that only the inner sole is exposed on the outer surface of the sole corresponding to a remaining portion of the sole.

Therefore, the combination of the OTIS '844 patent and the HIRAOKA et al. '235 patent with regard to Amended Independent Claim 24 do not show, disclose or teach the specific structure of a footwear sole for a shoe, a slipper or a sandal and the like of the claimed invention.

It would not have been obvious to the manufacturer to provide woven natural textile material to the aforementioned step of "forming at one outer sole . . . peripheral face of the sole" and the step of "providing the portion into which the outer sole . . . to a remaining portion of the sole", as these steps are unique processing steps.

Neither of the aforementioned prior art patents of OTIS and HIRAOKA disclose these specific steps.

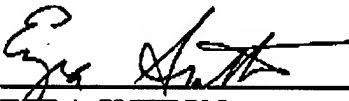
The OTIS '844 patent and the HIRAOKA ET AL. '235 patent, even when combined, do not teach or disclose the following elements of Amended Independent Claim 27, for a footwear sole and a method for forming the same as follows:

a) forming at least one outer sole including at least partially impregnating a rubber-free, woven natural textile material into at least a portion of at least one surface of at least one inner sole so that only the textile material is exposed on an outer surface of a sole of the footwear article corresponding to the portion, the outer surface corresponding to an exterior peripheral face of the sole; and

CONCLUSION

Thus, the prior art patents of OTIS '844 and HIRAOKA et al. '235, even when combined, do not teach or disclose the claimed features of Amended Independent Claims 15, 24 and 27 and the Claims which depend therefrom. For these reasons, it is respectfully requested that Applicant's Claims 15 to 20 and 24 to 29 be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,
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